

USS WHITE PLAINS

(AFS-4)

COMMAND HISTORY

1972

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CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS 1972

Jan 1-7 Third Line Swing of ^{Third} ~~Fourth~~ WESTPAC Deployment

7-9 Enroute Subic Bay

9-24 Load Subic Bay

24-26 Enroute Kaoshiung

26-29 Load Kaoshiung

29-31 Enroute Line

Feb 1-5 Fourth Line Swing

5-8 Enroute Singapore

8 Cross Equator

9-14 In-port Singapore

14-17 Enroute Subic Bay

17-22 Load Subic Bay

22-24 Enroute Line

24-28 Fifth Line Swing

Mar 1-4 Enroute Sattahip (Bangkok)

4-9 In-port Sattahip

9-11 Enroute Singapore

11 In-port Singapore

11-14 Enroute Subic Bay

14-20 Load Subic Bay

20-31 Sixth Line Swing

Apr 1-2 Enroute Subic Bay

2-11 Load Subic Bay

11-19 Seventh Line Swing

19-21 Enroute Subic Bay

Apr 21-26 Load Subic Bay
26-27 Load Kaoshiung
29-30 Enroute Line
May 1-11 Eighth Line Swing
11-12 Enroute Subic Bay
12-19 Load Subic Bay
19-20 Enroute Line
20-30 Ninth Line Swing
30-31 Enroute Subic Bay
31 Load Subic Bay
Jun 1-7 Load Subic Bay
7-8 Enroute Line
8-18 Tenth Line Swing
18-20 Enroute Hong Kong
20-25 In-port Hong Kong
25-27 Enroute Subic Bay
27-30 Load Adjust Subic Bay
Jul 1-5 Enroute Sasebo
5-8 In-port Sasebo
8-19 Enroute Alameda
10 Outchop SEVENTH Fleet
19 Arrive NSC Oakland
19-31 Upkeep NSC Oakland
Aug 1-31 Upkeep NSC Oakland
Sep 1-5 Upkeep NSC Oakland
5-30 RAV Todd Shipyard, Alameda

Oct 1-3 RAV Todd Shipyard, Alameda

3-23 Load NSC Oakland

10 Change of Command, NSC Oakland

23-31 Load Alameda

31 Underway from Alameda to Sasebo for Homeport Shift

Nov 1-13 Enroute Sasebo

13-30 RAV Sasebo for Navy Distillate Fuel Conversion

Dec 1-31 RAV Sasebo for Navy Distillate Fuel Conversion

NARRATIVE

After spending the Christmas holidays in the Indian Ocean supporting Task Force 74 including USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65), USS TRIPOLI (LPH-10) and a number of escorts, USS WHITE PLAINS (AFS-4) steamed into Singapore to spend New Years Eve in-port. The stay was not long, however, as WHITE PLAINS was underway early the next day for Vietnamese waters and her third line swing since arriving in WESTPAC 1 December 1971. Making a northerly swing this time, WHITE PLAINS serviced 20 units in Vung Tau, Cam Rahn Bay, Danang and on Yankee Station with 173 short tons of stores before arriving to load at Subic Bay on 9 January. After leaving Subic Bay on 24 January, WHITE PLAINS stopped in Kaoshiung, Taiwan for two days to load fresh produce before proceeding to Yankee Station. On this fourth swing she replenished Yankee Station units and then Market Time units on the way south to Singapore and the realm of King Neptune.

On 8 February, WHITE PLAINS incurred the royal wrath of Neptunus Rex for appearing in his domain with slimy polywogs on board. This scum of the ocean soon repented under torture, however, and were duly initiated into the ancient order of the deep. After the equator ceremony, WHITE PLAINS steamed into Singapore to load fresh produce and provide some welcome rest and relaxation for the crew.

Upon departing Singapore 14 February, WHITE PLAINS was returned to Subic Bay once again to load in preparation for her fifth line swing. While in-port, she received on board Captain NAYLOR, Commander Service Squadron NINE and his staff, and thus became the TG 73.5 Flagship. Underway once again on 24 February, WHITE PLAINS serviced units on Yankee Station and Market Time before visiting her first liberty port of the deployment. Also of note during the month of February was the visit of the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral ZUMWALT on 27 February.

The first of March saw WHITE PLAINS enroute to Sattahip, Thailand where she arrived on 4 March. Everyone on board had 48 hour liberty to visit Bangkok or enjoy the beautiful beaches in the Sattahip area. All good things must end, so on 9 March she was underway once more bound for Subic Bay, with a short stop enroute in Singapore for fresh produce. The loading in Subic was done 14-20 March, and then it was underway again for line swing number six.

In her sixth line swing, WHITE PLAINS provided logistic support to 33 ships, delivering 674 short tons of supplies from 2--31 March, including 181 tons to USS CONSTELLATION on 21 March.

By now the tempo of operations in Vietnam had taken a sharp upswing with the large scale invasion of South Vietnam by the North in early April. To stem the tide of the invasion, a large number of destroyers were stationed in the Danang/DMZ area firing hundreds of rounds a day. In addition, two more carriers were deployed to the area to provide air strikes against the North Vietnamese. April first found WHITE PLAINS steaming back to Subic Bay to reload. On 11 April she was underway again for Yankee Station. Her first customers on 13 April were the Naval Gunfire Support Destroyers,

whose fire was keeping the North Vietnamese from overrunning Danang. A heavy schedule of daylight Vertreps and night Conreps kept the crew working up to 20 hours a day. The pilots of HC-3, Det 106 were instrumental in providing destroyers with fast, efficient Vertreps designed to minimize their off station time. In total, 28 destroyer/cruiser type ships were replenished during this swing. This period was the first time WHITE PLAINS had replenished four carriers in one swing. On the evening of 14 April USS CORAL SEA received a mammoth 216 short tons of stores plus 5 1/2 tons of fleet freight, by far the largest unrep of the deployment. On the nights of 16, 17 and 18 April WHITE PLAINS serviced USS HANCOCK, USS KITTY HAWK, and USS CONSTELLATION, in that order. Also on 17 April, the 9 ships of the Amphibious Ready Group were serviced.

Her holds almost bare, WHITE PLAINS turned east toward Subic Bay on 19 April, having serviced 49 ships with 8900 line items aggregating 930 short tons. After a short and furious loadout in Subic Bay, she steamed north to Kaoshiung, Taiwan to load fresh produce, arriving 27 April and leaving 29 April.

In the month of May WHITE PLAINS experienced her heaviest replenishment schedule ever. In two line swings, 1-11 May and 20-30 May, the eighth and ninth of the deployment, she replenished 116 ships, supplying 1622.8 short tons of stores to units of the SEVENTH Fleet. These figures are believed to be new records for a ship of her class.

The month of June found WHITE PLAINS again in Subic Bay, loading for her tenth line swing of the deployment. Leaving Subic Bay on the 7th, she arrived on Yankee Station on the 8th and immediately went to work replenishing the 50 odd ships in the Yankee Station area, including "Freedom Train" destroyers, the Amphibious Ready Group and other Service Force ships. This line swing, destined to be the last of the deployment, culminated with a Conrep/Vertrep of USS KITTY HAWK during the evening of 14 June in which 199 short tons were passed.

Next came a long-awaited visit to Hong Kong, a port visit which had been cancelled twice previously. Six days, 20-25 June was spent in Hong Kong and maximum liberty was granted so that all hands could enjoy the charms of this beautiful city. The deployment was fast drawing to a close, however, so 25 June found WHITE PLAINS again underway bound for Subic Bay, there to adjust her load prior to returning to the States. Finally, on 30 June, after being relieved by USS NIAGARA FALLS (AFS-3), WHITE PLAINS got underway for Sasebo, Japan and outchop.

After a short 3 days in Sasebo, WHITE PLAINS was underway once more, but this time eastward toward California and her homeport of Alameda. Landfall was made off Point Arena, California, 18 July and the next morning WHITE PLAINS was given a hero's welcome as she passed beneath the Golden Gate and moored at the Naval Supply Center, Oakland, California. The remainder of July was spent in a leave/upkeep status at the Naval Supply Center.

The month of August opened with a bang as WHITE PLAINS received formal notification on 2 August that she was to be sent on an extended deployment with her new homeport being Sasebo, Japan. The most surprising part of this news was that her departure date was less than 90 days away. Since the extended deployment concept was designed as an all-volunteer activity, effort was concentrated in screening the crew to determine volunteer/non-volunteer status. Detailing activities tried to replace non-volunteers with volunteers from throughout the Pacific Fleet. This effort was successful in that 93% volunteers sailed with WHITE PLAINS to Sasebo.

September found feverish activity on WHITE PLAINS in preparation for her extended deployment to Sasebo in late October. Detailed arrangements had to be made for transporting dependents, household goods, private vehicles, and pets of crewmembers to Sasebo. The ship shifted from Oakland to Todd Shipyard, Alameda, California, on 5 September for a period of restricted availability to accomplish some long overdue repair work. Work continued night and day until 3 October, when WHITE PLAINS again moved back to her berth at Naval Supply Center, Oakland to commence loading for her extended deployment.

The month of October also marked the arrival of a new Commanding Officer for WHITE PLAINS. On October 10, in a ceremony held on board, Captain R. J. SCHULTE, USN, became for fourth Commanding Officer of the USS WHITE PLAINS. Upon his relief, Captain BARKER, left for the Mediterranean to take command of the Aircraft Carrier USS INTREPID (CV-11). October also was the time for last-minute preparations prior to getting underway for Sasebo -- briefings for the crew and their dependents, and the departure of the advance liaison team who would assist dependents arriving in Sasebo prior to the ships arrival.

Finally, sailing day arrived, and at 1000 on 31 October WHITE PLAINS was again underway for a deployment of an unusual nature. Unusual too, was her cargo. On that day she carried 16 dependent wives, 16 children, a female Japanese Language instructor and a Navy nurse. Her cargo also included 16 Milvans of household goods on the flight deck, 50 containers of household goods in her holds, 16 private vehicles lashed on the main deck, and 6 dogs and 3 cats in cages in the helo hangar.

The transit to Sasebo was used for fundamental training since only 147 trained personnel of an EDP of 335 remained with the ship. On the morning of 13 November WHITE PLAINS eased into India Basin, in her new homeport of Sasebo, Japan. The next 60 days were to be spent in this berth in restricted availability in order to accomplish a major engineering job, conversion from NSFO to ND-fuel.

During the month of December work on the fuel conversion progressed smoothly, WHITE PLAINSMEN and their families were busy adjusting to life in Japan and looked forward to Christmas and New Years in port.

So ended 1972, without a doubt the busiest year in WHITE PLAINS short history. She distinguished herself beyond all expectations in her primary mission, supplying logistic support to the Fleet. She also accomplished her homeport shift in minimum time under difficult circumstances.

CAPTAIN RICHARD J. SCHULTE, USN

Captain SCHULTE entered Naval Flight Training under the NAV-CAD Program in March 1949. He was commissioned an Ensign and designated a Naval Aviator in July 1950.

His first fleet assignment was with VP-6 in Korea, Japan and Alaska. The next three years he was a Basic Flight Instructor in Primary and Gunnery courses at Pensacola. Duty aboard USS HANCOCK followed as Assistant CIC Officer, then Flight Deck Officer and finally Assistant Air Operations Officer.

Captain SCHULTE served with VAH-4 aboard USS TICONDEROGA in 1959-60, then earned a Bachelor of Naval Science degree at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

In 1963 he was assigned to Air Development Squadron FIVE at China Lake, California as Assistant Projects Officer.

A tour in VP-121 as Air to Ground Delivery Officer followed, and in 1966 he joined VF-161 as Executive Officer aboard USS CONSTELLATION. Captain SCHULTE was Commanding Officer of VF-161 aboard USS CORAL SEA in 1967.

He joined the Ticonderoga "Tigers" as Air Officer in 1968 and 1969 then reported back to VF-121 as Commanding Officer.

In August 1970 he entered the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington. Captain SCHULTE came to WHITE PLAINS from an assignment as the Sidewinder Air-to-Air Missile Program Manager at the Naval Air Systems Command Headquarters.

Captain SCHULTE's combat decorations include the Silver Star, Two Distinguished Flying Crosses, Bronze Star, Twenty-one Air Medals, Five Navy Unit Commendations, Two Meritorious Unit Commendations, the Korean Presidential Unit Commendation, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and the Vietnamese DSO Second Class.